Conf
Pam
#708
no. 1-4

Gen'l Order no. 1 - 4

Duke University Libraries
General orders
Conf Pam #708
D99060876 2

HEAD QUARTERS CONFEDERATE ARMY
9th February, 1865.

GENERAL ORDER
No. 1.

In obedience to General Order No. 6, Adjutant & Inspector General's Office, 6th February, 1865, I assume command of the Military forces of the Confederate States. Deeply impressed with the difficulties and responsibility of the position and humbly invoking the guidance of Almighty God, I rely for success upon the courage and fortitude of the Army, sustained by the patriotism and firmness of the people, confident that their united efforts, under the blessing of Heaven, will secure peace and independence.

The Head Quarters of the Army, to which all special reports and communications will be addressed, will be for the present with the Army of Northern Virginia. The stated and regular returns and reports of each Army and Department will be forwarded as heretofore to the Office of the Adjutant & Inspector General.

R. E. LEE,
General.

HEAD QUARTERS ARMIES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES,
11th February, 1865.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 2.

In entering upon the campaign about to open, the General-in-Chief feels assured that the soldiers who have so long and so nobly borne the hardships and dangers of the war, require no exortation to respond to the calls of honor and duty.

With the liberty transmitted by their forefathers they have inherited the spirit to defend it.

The choice between war and abject submission is before them.

To such a proposal, brave men with arms in their hands can have but one answer.

They cannot barter manhood for peace nor the right of self government for life or property.

But justice to them requires a sterner admonition to those who have abandoned their comrades in the hour of peril.

A last opportunity is afforded them to wipe out the disgrace and escape the punishment of their crimes.

By authority of the President of the Confederate States a pardon is announced to such deserters and men improperly absent as shall return to the commands to which they belong within the shortest possible time, not exceeding twenty days from the publication of this Order, at the Head Quarters of the Department in which they may be.

Those who may be prevented by interruption of communications, may report within the time specified to the nearest enrolling officer or other officer on duty, to be forwarded as soon as practicable, and upon presenting a certificate from such officer showing compliance with the requirement, will receive the pardon hereby offered.

Those who have deserted to the service of the enemy, or who have deserted after having been once pardoned for the same offence, and those who shall desert or absent themselves without authority after the publication of this Order, are excluded from its benefits. Nor does the offer of pardon extend to other offences than desertion and absence without permission.

By the same authority it is also declared that no general amnesty will again be granted, and those who refuse to accept the pardon now offered, or who shall hereafter desert or absent themselves without leave, shall suffer such punishment as the Courts may impose, and no application for clemency will be entertained.

Taking new resolution from the fate which our enemies intend for us, let every man devote all his energies to the common defence.

Our resources wisely and vigorously employed, are ample, and with a brave army, sustained by a determined and united people, success with God's assistance cannot be doubtful.

The advantages of the enemy will have but little value if we do not permit them to impair our resolution. Let us then oppose constancy to adversity, fortitude to suffering and courage to danger, with the firm assurance that He who gave freedom to our fathers, will bless the efforts of their children to preserve it.

R. E. LEE,
General.

RBR
Coll
Box
#708

HEAD QUARTERS ARMIES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES
11th February, 1865.

GENERAL ORDERS.
No. 3.

The discipline and efficiency of the army have been greatly impaired by men leaving their proper commands to join others, in which they find service more agreeable.

This practice, almost as injurious in its consequences as the crime of desertion, by the Articles of War, exposes the offender to a similar punishment, and subjects the officer receiving him to dismissal from the army.

It is therefore declared that the provisions of General Order No. 2, of this date, from Army Head Quarters apply to such men as have left their proper commands and joined others without being regularly transferred. They will receive the pardon promised in that Order, upon complying with its conditions, or suffer the consequences attached to neglecting it.

The names of such absentees will be forthwith reported to these Head Quarters by the officers with whom they are serving, and immediate measures taken to return them to their proper commands.

As soon as practicable, an inspection will be made, and charges will be preferred against those who neglect to enforce this Order.

R. E. LEE,
General.

HEAD QUARTERS ARMIES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES,
22nd February, 1865.

GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 4.

I. The experience of our own and other armies having established, that the safety no less than the efficiency of troops, requires that order be maintained, and every man kept in his proper position in action, the following instructions will be immediately carried into effect:

A thorough examination by competent officers selected by the Corps Commander, or officer commanding detached troops, will be made as to the qualifications and character of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers of each company. Such of the former as shall be reported deficient in intelligence, coolness, and capacity, will be brought before Examining Boards, and those of the latter so reported, will be reduced to the ranks. Appointments to fill vacancies among the non-commissioned officers will be made from those soldiers of the company most distinguished for courage, discipline and attention to duty. The whole number of file closers in each company shall be one for every ten men, and for this purpose Lance appointments will be given if necessary, to men of the character above described, who will be required to wear a distinctive badge.

II. The file closers, will be carefully instructed in their duties by the regimental commanders, and vacancies will be filled as they occur among the non-commissioned and Lance officers from the best and most tried soldiers of the company. On the march they will be required to prevent straggling, and be held responsible for the presence of their respective squads of ten. In action, they will keep two paces behind the rear rank of their several squads, the non-commissioned and Lance officers with loaded guns and fixed bayonets. They will be diligently instructed to aid in preserving order in the ranks and enforcing obedience to commands, and to permit no man to leave his place, unless wounded, excused in writing by the Medical officer of the regiment, or by order of the regimental commander. For this purpose, they will use such degree of force as may be necessary. If any refuse to advance, disobey orders, or leave the ranks to plunder or to retreat, the file closers will promptly cut down or fire upon the delinquents. They will treat in the same manner any man who uses words or actions calculated to produce alarm among the troops. Justice to the brave men who remain at their posts, no less than the success to our arms, demands that this order be rigorously executed, and it will be enjoined upon file closers that they shall make the evasion of duty more dangerous than its performance.

III. The value of the foregoing order will depend upon the character of the file closers, and the diligence with which they are instructed. None should be selected but such as can understand and appreciate the importance of their duties, and possess the necessary coolness and determination to perform them faithfully. Regimental Commanders will promptly prefer charges against the commissioned officers, and return to the ranks all others who neglect or refuse to carry out the foregoing instructions.

R. E. LEE,
General.

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5